

THE REFORMER.

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Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth. Jeremiah v. 1.

Further extracts from the Freethinking Christians' Magazine.

PLEA OF THE CLERGY, AS TO USEFULNESS, CONSIDERED.

“Before pronouncing the priesthood to be a useless race, and only calculated to injure the cause they profess to serve, let us hear their own defence.

“The sum of their arguments in their own defence is, that under the old dispensation priests were appointed by God to teach the people; and that, as under the new dispensation the church is to be taught, as well as under the old, there must consequently be teachers; and as the priests under the law were supported by the people, so must the teachers be under the present dispensation. This argument is altogether without foundation. The priests under the law were, it is true, appointed by God, but by him also was an end put to their acting in that character; and men might as well argue that God has not sent the Messiah into the world, because, in the time of Moses, he had not sent him, as argue for the continuance of the priestly office, because by Moses that office was created and instituted. The church is the temple of God, and believers are his priests, from the highest to the lowest of them; there is no distinction in this respect among them. And even if a man should be dumb, or, able to speak but five words with the understanding, yet if he be a Christian, he is a *priest*, according to the sense of the word in the New Testament, and capable of offering to God a proper and an acceptable sacrifice. The church must evidently be best taught when all its members consider themselves bound to act as such; when they excite each other to love and to good works; they then show forth his praise, who called them from darkness into his marvellous light. *These* are priests very different from those who sell, to the highest bidder, their independence, delivering themselves up to be

tools of religious faction, to teach, and defend for hire, the dogmas of a sect.

“But the priest urges his usefulness in turning the attention of the careless to the things of eternity. The plea of usefulness has operated as a quietus to the consciences of many, who have openly avowed their belief of the impropriety of countenancing the corruptions of Christianity. They ought at once to plead for the propriety of the abominations of the mother of harlots; for while they take shelter under the roof of any of her daughters, and receive their pay, they are as effectually opposing Christianity, and helping antichrist, as if they worshipped at the shrine of the lady of Loretto. * * * * * It is said that there are no fewer than 30,000 priests in Britain. The combined talents of so many men, in the course of an age, ought to do wonders. But what have the clergy effected? Nothing! at least little that does them any credit. In one way they have done much; they have, by arrogating to themselves the exclusive right of teaching Christianity, prevented the exercise of the talents of thousands, nay of millions, who, in this one way, might have immensely contributed to the prosperity of truth. Nothing is more true than that the man who is appointed to teach a church is often less fit for such an employment than many of those whom he undertakes to teach. When priests are able to disprove this one fact, we shall listen to their plea respecting usefulness.

“But if the priest will still urge his usefulness, let him show wherein it consists. What actual benefit accrues to society from his employment? He tells us he teaches Christianity; but Christianity is taught, in a manner far superior to any thing of which he is capable, in the New Testament; there the whole appears simple and easy. The discourses of Jesus and his apostles are, in themselves, fully sufficient to give any one a complete knowledge of Christianity; and from them more may be learned in one hour, than from a thousand of the sermons which priests are in the habit of delivering from their pulpits. Instead of teaching, it appears rather to be the design of these men to darken Christianity. They represent it as being mysterious and obscure: and to rescue it from this obscurity, a course of study, consisting

of moral and natural philosophy, school divinity, logic, and mathematics, is indispensably necessary.

“By these, and such like arguments, are the great body of the people deluded, and induced to support in idleness, and often in luxury, a race of men, to do what might be much better done without them. It may, however, be proper here to say who are meant by the term *priest*. By the term priest then is meant all, of every denomination, sect and party, who assume the exclusive right of teaching the societies to which they belong, from the first clergyman in Europe, down to the plain, though reverend, Methodist minister. Our Dissenters, indeed, are the weakest, and most inconsistent on this head. Their consciences will not permit them to dwell under the roof of the mother of harlots, yet they cling to the threshold of her dwelling as closely as they can. They must have their minister, and a pulpit to hold him in; he must be denominated *the reverend*, and dress like other priests, otherwise he would give offence to the pious people who built the chapel, or hurt the feelings of the lady who made the church a present of the minister's gown, and the pulpit cushion. And, ‘that the word may become effectual to salvation,’ the Methodist parson must smooth down his hair, dress in black, assume a grave look, alter his very gait, and cast his eyes towards the ground lest he should behold vanity. * * * In fact, it is difficult for the generality of people to read the history of divine revelation, without having associated together, in the mind, the idea of a minister and a man in a long black gown. Let no one soften down the subject by saying these things are harmless in themselves. They are indeed harmless to those who have knowledge enough to despise them; but they are far otherwise to the greater part of professing Christians. Such is the effect of them on the minds of some, that they are considered necessary to give effect to the word of God himself. If this is not so, will priests have the goodness to say why they do not lay them aside? Christianity needs not the aid of such trifles; and we find its great founder rebuking the priests of old for making use of them, and cautioning his disciples against imitating them.

“The titles assumed by priests are a complete burlesque on common sense. Let any one bestow those titles on men

who are engaged in the common business of life, and the association will appear so ludicrous as that it might excite the smile of St. Job, or *the right reverend father in God, Peter*. Many of the Dissenting priests in this country are so fond of these titles, that they have been known to reprove their friends for omitting to style them 'the reverend,' in addressing their post letters. With these reverend gentlemen the country swarms, and yet we every day hear complaints of the scarcity of ministers. It is not enough that we have Moses and the prophets, Jesus and the apostles, to teach us; no! the scriptures are of little use to us without a priest to put a sense on them for us; for this the soldier must quit the ranks, the taylor his shopboard, and the cobbler his stall, and in company together hie them away to the divinity school. After having learned to read a little Greek and Latin, to split up texts of scripture, and to bring something out of nothing, behold the priest! He is now considered fit for use, and those who can afford to give most for him, may have him. These are for the most part young men, who, in general, have a most miserable share of Christian knowledge; they are sometimes boys; but having obtained a call from Heaven to undertake this work, they must of course obey; they must undertake the care of a church, and teach many who are much fitter to teach them.

"When these, and other absurdities connected with the priesthood are considered, need we wonder at the present dark state of men as it respects religion? surely not. This one class has been the cause of more misery to the human race than any other description of men. The evils of priestcraft have deluged the world with human blood: how many thousands have been wantonly sacrificed to the absurd dogmas of arrogant priests! what scenes of cruelty have been exhibited by them in all ages! what ignorance, what superstition, what blindness, what licentiousness, what tyranny, what brutal stubbornness, have been covered by the habiliments of the sacred order! What a disgrace to Christianity! what an intolerable burden to society! what a curse to any nation, is the modern priesthood! It becomes the duty of every Christian to testify against these abominations; to oppose them by every proper means in his power; that Christianity may be cleansed from all such filth, and appear in the sight of the world in her native purity."

[From another writer in the same publication.]

“The idea that the clergy, as a body, are not only useful but absolutely necessary to the existence of Christianity, is so deeply rooted in the minds of the multitude, that they find it a difficult thing to distinguish between opposition to the clergy, and flying in the face of the appointment of heaven.

“If a man speak or write against the propriety of such an order of beings, he is instantly marked down as a Deist, or an Atheist; he cannot be a Christian, for he reviles the ministers of Jesus. The hold which this superstition has taken of mankind is truly astonishing; men act as though they conceived themselves doomed to be governed by the priesthood—without them, they can do nothing.

“The *clergyman* is a character of great utility. He assists in directing the affairs of the state; the king, the princes, the nobles, the lords and ladies of the land, must have their *chaplains*; without a *priest*, the most enlightened parish would soon sink into Egyptian darkness; what body corporate is complete without them? In all the eminent departments of life his utility is conspicuous. He stands in the army and in the navy, not only to teach them virtue, and by his good example give a tone to the manners of our soldiers and sailors, but as the medium through which they must look for the divine blessing on their endeavours to subdue the pride and malice of their *impious* foes. He consecrates, i. e. sets apart from a profane to holy use, the banners under which they fight; he in like manner consecrates churches, chapels, altars, &c.; he christens, or makes Christians of, both children and stone bridges; in a word, a man is not considered as having made an honourable entrance into, nor exit from, the world, without passing through his hands. To die ‘*without benefit of clergy*,’ is next to being cut off from the divine favour; nor is the earth in a fit state to receive our dead bodies till it is blessed by the *priest*.

“Now, Sir, as one design of your Magazine is ‘*to lay the axe at the root of priestcraft*,’ permit me to offer to your readers a few thoughts on this subject.

“And here it may be proper to intimate, that, by the term clergy, I do not mean those alone who are in the pay of national churches, but all who assume the office of the priest.

hood by professing themselves special teachers of Christianity, from the pope, the first clergyman in Europe, down to the plain, yet reverend Methodist minister; whether they wear the habiliments of Rome or not, whether they wear black or any other colour; whether they receive pay or officiate gratis; provided they are countenancing, by their example, the unscriptural practice of setting up an individual to teach the church to the exclusion of its other members.

“Many who have certainly done much in the way of restoring Christianity to its original simplicity, do still retain many of those corruptions, which for ages have obscured its glory from the view of the world. The support of what is called a regular standing ministry is none of the least of those evils, and yet it appears to be the last part of the fabric of antichrist that will be destroyed; and till it be demolished, Christianity will never have an extensive diffusion.

“Driven from every other refuge, and ashamed of attempting to prove from Scripture the necessity of such an order of men in the church, the friends of this system shelter themselves under the plea of utility. * * * * To this idea then let us confine our remarks, and endeavour to ascertain what degree of support it derives from the New Testament.

“First, as it respects what is called PREACHING the GOSPEL. By preaching the gospel, the different sects mean calling the attention of the multitude to the *opinions* which *they severally entertain* of the doctrine of Jesus and his apostles; pointing out the happiness arising from embracing those opinions, and declaring in a state of enmity to God all who reject them. When the preacher is hired, he is bound down to promulgate, and, to the utmost of his power, maintain the peculiar tenets of the party employing him; if he departs from this agreement, they turn him off, and provide themselves with another who has ‘the cause’ more at heart. Thus all the different sects have their preachers of the gospel, and the preacher is reckoned *useful* or unsuccessful, according to the number of converts he makes to his sect.

“Thus then, as preachers, priests may be very useful in promoting the interests of party, but this by no means proves that they are useful to Christianity, but the contrary.

Sectarianism certainly requires their most powerful aid; Christianity is injured whenever they touch it. But let us ask if the gospel needs any preachers.

“When the apostles received their commission to proclaim to the world the kingdom of God, they continued to execute it till they were called to seal their testimony with their blood. Previous, however, to their leaving the world, they had given the church a complete account of all things that Jesus did and taught; they put them in possession of every thing necessary to be known respecting salvation; and every proper means was adopted for perpetuating the knowledge of these things throughout all ages. Hence the absurdity of men professing to be the *successors* of the apostles. Successors they need none; ‘*being dead they yet speak*,’ and from what they say, any man who has the use of his reason may easily perceive, established by the most luminous evidence, that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ of God.

“Now, if the apostles are not at this hour preaching the good tidings in every city, town, village and family in this kingdom, what is the reason? If the voices of Jesus and his apostles are not heard in every village, it is not because they may not; have not the poorest of the people the scriptures? If they are unable to purchase them, they may obtain them gratis; and if they cannot read them, they may have them read in their hearing. If so, then I argue that they have the benefit of the preaching of Christ and his apostles, who, in a manner far superior to the best ‘*pulpit preaching*,’ declare unto men the way of life. They have these, and what need they more? has the modern preacher any thing to proclaim which the scriptures do not make known to us? Can he exhibit to us the Deity in a more exalted view than Jesus did? Does he imagine that he can, in greater simplicity, with more eloquence and power, reprove the wickedness of men, and point out the path of rectitude? Are the wild, the incoherent, and unreasonable ravings of modern preachers to be preferred to the calm and rational expostulations of Jesus? If not, where is the great necessity for such a host of preachers as Christianity is burthened with? Those who denominate themselves preachers of the gospel, would have us believe such is their utility, that, without their presence, we cannot have the gospel. Hence nothing is more common than to

hear them asking one another if the gospel is preached in such a place; and to find in their journals accounts of their having *introduced* the gospel into this and the other town or village, although for ages the inhabitants of those places have been in possession of the scriptures. Instead, then, of these preachers being useful, they are manifestly injurious to the interests of Christianity; they lead the people to imagine that, without their assistance, the scriptures are of little use; they allow, indeed, that men may, by the exercise of reason, attain the literal, or, as they sometimes call it, '*the natural meaning*' of scripture, but without a *spiritual man* to open them, they affirm, no one can understand them aright. Such language is nothing short of '*a scandalous libel*' upon the Almighty. He has given us a revelation of his will; but before we can reap any benefit from it, we must pay a priest to explain it to us, and if we refuse to do this we must perish forever!!

"Till this vile delusion is no longer practised in our land, let us cease to affect surprise at the conduct of those who actually forbid the use of the scriptures among the people at large; they are, in so doing, more consistent than their neighbours; for if a priest is necessary to give the meaning of scripture, it is but right that the sacred deposit should be confined to his holy care.

"With modern Christians, all that the apostles and first Christians did and said, is of no use without a minister; and this minister is not a man who has, in the church, given full proof of possessing the qualifications mentioned as necessary to fit him for the office, by Paul, 1 Tim. iii. 1 to 10; but generally a young man, sometimes a boy, whose assurance is superior to his understanding, and whose time has been spent chiefly within the walls of a school, where he had but little opportunity of knowing much of Christianity; the greater stranger he is to them so much the better; his presence is essential to those worshipping their maker; without him they cannot assemble together; but if disappointed, they close the doors of their place of meeting, and return with rueful countenances to their home, to make the best shift they can by reading their bibles:—or, perhaps, a few of the most *godly* will remain to hold what is called a prayer meeting, in which they may often be heard to bewail the disappointment

they have sustained, and to profess unfeigned submission to the will of God, who has seen fit to deprive them of the labours of his servant for that day. Thus the preacher is made a man of great importance indeed; the bond of union in the church; the all and all of modern Christianity; and I am mistaken, if any of those churches which lay claim to so much primitive simplicity, would not feel themselves greatly disappointed, if, for a whole day, instead of their minister, Jesus and his apostles should be heard in their assembly.

“Perhaps some may be disposed to attribute these remarks to a desire of bringing into contempt a body of respectable and useful men. But it is not for the sake of joining the common cry against the clergy that they make their appearance. The writer wishes to appeal to matter of fact; he is convinced that the existence of a distinct body of men, as the sole teachers of Christianity, is contrary to divine revelation; that if Christians in general acted as they ought to do, the supposed necessity of such an order of men would very soon disappear; that they are the cause of the great ignorance that reigns among the various sects professing Christianity, inasmuch as they keep back the exercise of the talents of thousands, whose united exertions, as members of the church of God, might do much in promoting the interests of religion. He has not the smallest degree of dislike to them as *men*; but as *clergymen*, he can in no respect esteem them; as men, as Christians, and as members of the Christian church, he is persuaded that they would appear much more respectable, and make themselves more eminently useful than they can as clergymen. In fact, notwithstanding all that is said about their respectability and utility as a body, the clergy have never been so much esteemed as they appear to have supposed they were; they have been more dreaded than loved; and although the people have felt them to be a heavy burden, they have not had resolution to free themselves of their load. Supposing then that Christians should unanimously resolve to abolish the order, the clergy could have no ground of complaint; for, as men, and as *Christians*, they would not be injured thereby: they deny that they preach for hire, consequently Christianity would have the benefit of their services whether they were paid or not; as men they could lose nothing by standing on a footing with other men,

for the clerical character forms no part of the rights of men."

FOR THE REFORMER.

"If we see the Brahmin of Hindostan using the superstition he has created to procure to himself and his order, certain distinctions and privileges—we have seen the professed Christian priest doing the same; and however melancholy the reflection may be, the decline of respect for that religion which in itself is so pure, may principally be ascribed to the pride and misconduct of its teachers and professors."

The Jewish priests had planned the manner in which the Messiah would come; the kind of government he should establish; and miracles he should perform—They supposed that he would make his appearance "in the clouds of heaven, &c."—That under his reign, their city, temple, and nation, would be exalted to a greater height of glory, than in the days of Solomon, and that the heathen nations around them would soon be subdued or destroyed by the immediate power of the PRINCE OF PEACE; and they so explained the prophecies as to impose an implicit belief of their doctrines, (with but few exceptions,) on the whole Jewish nation. In like manner, the generality of the professed christian priesthood, have been laying plans for the second coming of the Messiah, and actually scheming to collect the Jews together, as if to fit them to take possession, once more, of the city of Jerusalem and the land of Judea.*

A few short extracts from the *report* of the society at New York, and the 1st and 4th No. of their publication, entitled, ISRAEL'S ADVOCATE, or the restoration of the Jews contemplated and urged, will give some idea of the religion, character, and designs of the persons engaged in this NEW CRUSADE—in the progress of which, if they should succeed in obtaining money, we may safely conclude that the earth will be made to groan, as heavily, under the weight of stee-

* Joseph Samuel Christian Frederick Frey, in his sermons, is very positive on this "head of discourse," and boldly explains (as his progenitors did,) the prophecies, so as to make it sure to his gentile hearers, that, *his people shall again be put in possession of Jerusalem and all Judea.*

ple-houses with bells, and palaces with presidents and professors, and colleges with swarms of indigent young men (both Gentiles and Jews) for the ministry, as at Princeton or Andover.

Speech of Mr. Smith. "But in what way the restoration of Israel should best be provided for, so far as means were concerned, seems not until recently, to have been much considered. You have conceived a plan for colonizing them, * * * and your report answers the amazing fact, that a movement for such a purpose has already been made, and that it is to be in this country and this state.

"It is remarkable by what movements and coincidences in Providence you have been led to this measure. * * * It is now many years since an aged English divine fixed on the year 1816, for the incipient return of the Jews, [calculating its completion in 1866.] Now you know that it was in that very year, [1816] your distinguished fellow-labourer [Frey,] arrived in this country, and that the present spirit of enterprise, had its birth from that moment.* Take another fact:—while you are beginning to think, and are making preparations—a German nobleman, moved by the same mysterious spirit, prepares an asylum for Jews, in his country, and sends his agent, our beloved Polish [Jewish] brother,† now present, to propose that very measure, * * *

* This Mr. SMITH, (who, by his style, I take to be a *Briton*) should have "taken date," not from *the moment* of Frey's arrival in this country, but from *the moment* that he was dismissed from his "fat living" by his late Gentile congregation in the city of New York, where this cunning Israelite, would, no doubt, still have continued, had they been willing to "sit under his preaching;" and had it not have been the case, as I was informed, that the trustees, finding themselves involved in a heavy debt by enlarging his meetinghouse, and that instead of payers (of pew-rent, &c.) increasing, many were dropping off—they dropped him.

† "*Polish brother.*"—This German new adventurer is thus complimented by the Society, in the commencement of their report: "The magnitude, the novelty, &c. [of the plans,] have retarded the operation of the Society. * * * Convinced that the purposes of God were teeming with some stupendous results, soon to be realized by the conversion of Jews to Christianity, * * * to be accomplished, not by miracles, [the old doctrine was, that the conversion of either a Jew or a Gentile, was one of the greatest of miracles,] but by means, and those means, the humanity, prayers, and exertions, [money again,] of Christians, and that the time

on which you have now entered—Is not this remarkable? * Does it not look like the doings of that same eternal spirit who simultaneously influenced a Peter, at Joppa, and a Cornelius, at Cesarea? * * * Yes, gentlemen! you have evidently been led, &c.—You will not be exalted, if I say, you have been highly honoured in this employ—Go on Gentlemen! and if you want pecuniary means, [money] ask for it—in such a cause! the gold and silver will melt down at your touch, [*Midas* like,] and if you do not procure as much as you need,† it will be your own fault.” A. B.

is near, even at the doors! * * * Scarcely had the Board taken the attitude of expectancy, when the signal was given by the providential arrival, on our shores, and to our city, of Mr. Jadownisky, [he too like Frey, had *several names given him by his god-fathers at his baptism,*] a converted Jew [by means,] as a special agent from a benevolent Nobleman, in Germany, ADELBERT, COUNT VON DER RECKE, who is piously devoting his property, his life, and the influence of his illustrious name, to the same object for which our society was formed.” The *illustriousness of the Count's name*, may do something towards the object of the Society—it may influence some of our admirers of titles, &c. *to give money*, but as to any influence in the matter of a *true conversion*, it can have none,—for proof of which, see Acts iv. 12.

This German count, speaking of his Jewish colony at Dussulthal, on the Rhine, observes: “It is not our object and design to educate the young Jewish converts for missionaries. The missionary life, unassuming and most self-denying as it is, [that it is so wants proof,] appears to the youth in a different aspect, and they often cherish only a desire to traverse the world, and have their names in the public prints, while anxious to be educated for a missionary.” How many in this country resemble these German Jewish converts, is left for the reader to determine.

* *Is not this remarkable?* There seems to have been some juggling among these Germans—The idea of an Asylum for Jews, was long since started, and the public prints abounded, a few years ago, with memorials from a noted character, to the Legislature of New York, on the subject of granting him the right of soil to *Grand Isle* in the St. Lawrence, intended for an asylum (*emporium*) to the people of his nation—Is there any doubt, but that a correspondence has been held between the Count and Frey, on this subject?

† This man appears to have had little acquaintance with the clerical appetite for the *mammon* of this world. A clergyman, the other day, in his sermon, calculated that this quarter of the world, alone, would require 400,000 missionaries; in the education of whom, he probably would like to be appointed to a *professorship*, with “*a large salary.*”

*For the Reformer.*THOUGHTS ON THE ATTEMPT TO REBUILD JERUSALEM IN THE
UNITED STATES.

In addition to the various imposing schemes of designing men, that haunt the coffers of industry, we have recently been annoyed with the pressing solicitations of an universal beggar, said to be a converted Jew, the agent and organ of an association "for meliorating [or rather evangelizing] the condition of the Jews," with documental authority to gather in the *scattered fractions*, if any have escaped the nice calculations and diligent researches of his importunate and successful begging predecessors; who, in order to flatter a hen-pecked and bewildered audience into a munificent mood, pathetically appealed to them as moralists, as philanthropists, as christians refined, to know whether it be not incumbent on us to contribute toward providing an asylum, somewhere in these United States, for the accommodation of poor *christianized* Jews from any part of the world, coming "*well recommended for morals and industry, and without charge to the Society—whose reception and continuance in the settlement shall be at all times, at the discretion of the directors:*" and it seems that instruction and "*such employment as shall be assigned them,*" with other regulations, not mentioned, will be gratuitously and Pharaoh-like administered. But I would ask, how is an indigent Jew, on the other side the Atlantic, destitute of money, morals, or industry, to be benefited by this institution? And if he have these constitutional requisites what will he care about colonizing the wilds of America? Or what inducement can he have to put himself under the authority and dominion of men? The person who does this must be such an intolerable dunce as to be a nuisance to society, and well calculated for a vassal. Whence comes the precedent for this novel mode of christianizing, the very reverse of the primitive practice? Mark the very emblem of *aristocracy* stamped on the front of these glaring proposals to establish an hierarchy, over the necessitous, in this land of liberty! Is it not a species of privateering on the rights of the credulous? For my part, I see nothing like "melioration" in the scheme—nothing like relieving "temporal wants," or restoring the long-lost privileges of the house of Israel; but

I clearly behold something subversive of the genuine principles of liberty.

Now, reader, is it possible that a man in his right senses, possessing a tolerable knowledge of men and things, can believe that any Jew of character or respectability will *barter away his liberty* for the partial inheritance of a sequestered, and perhaps unproductive spot, not of his own choosing, in some trackless region of America. Is not the constitution and the far-famed religious liberties of these United States sufficient to induce abundant emigration by *holding out the arm of protection to all*, whether Jew or Christian, Mahometan or Brahmin. In this, our national constitution, (founded on the equal and imprescriptible rights of man) there is not a word of these new-fangled imposing conditions about "Christian instruction"—"assigned employment," or "discretionary reception and continuance:" however, we are not permitted to disturb the public peace with impunity; nor do we think it consistent with rational liberty to interrupt domestic tranquillity, as is often the case with those who reap where they have not sown, or take where they should, in charity, bestow.

The mission of this would-be temporal Messiah, favours the description and circumstance of the artful cat in the fable, who had by various stratagems beguiled many of the vermin of the neighbourhood into her clutches—and I apprehend that a Jew will be as discerning and cautious as the experienced rat, when he perceived an unusual image at the bottom of a meal tub, where he was wont to go—"Something whispers me (said he) there is mischief concealed in that white heap yonder."—"There is no harm in keeping at a distance." And in fact, it proved to be *the identical old cat, disguised with meal*, who had long supported herself by changeable artifice; just like our mealy-managing, or sheep skin ecclesiastics, who prey without mercy, upon the unsuspecting cheated multitude, through their ignorance and superstitious credulity. And moreover, I reprobate the imposing design of ransacking the continent from Georgia to Maine in quest of *means* to relieve the "temporal wants" of people, thousands of miles off, while we have thousands at home equally necessitous—"a degraded remnant" of our own making! whose "condition" cries aloud for the "meliorat-

ing" helping hand of philanthropy: and who have a well-founded claim to our undivided attention. It is not a sufficient atonement for the moral deformity of our oppressive transgressions, that we merely let the oppressed go free. The warning voice of reason and returning justice has pierced the dull organs of intellectual hearing—nay, the sacred ties of morality and of religion enjoin us, not only to restore the *natural*, but the *equitable* rights of the free born sons of Africa, whom we have to our shame, robbed and enslaved, and oppressed into an almost irreparable state of unmerited degradation: and whom we now behold as *tattered moving monuments* of inflicted cruelty and professional inconsistency. Therefore, let charity be exercised at home, where it generally begins. Let us act consistently, do as we would be done by, and first repair the moral defects that lie overlooked at our own doors.

When I consider that more than seventeen centuries have elapsed since the total dispersion of the persecuted remnant of Israel over the four quarters of the globe, a query arises in my mind, not easily resolved, namely: what is it that has maintained and preserved them, through the most trying circumstances, a distinct, undivided people, uniformly the same in their worship—keeping the law and ordinances of their fathers as a perpetual observance through all their generations? Is it owing to oppression? Is it the scoffs and prevailing calumnies of their avowed enemies that bind them together? And is it for want of power that they are so *unlike* professing christians?—who have incessantly been quarrelling, dividing, persecuting, and shedding each other's blood, all (as each affirmed) for the glory of God!! But be all this as it may, if the Jews are ever to be restored to a national standing, and Jerusalem rebuilt, it must be through the interposition of that God who made the everlasting covenant with their fathers—and not by the intolerent machinations of conjuring bishops and interested begging priests, so puffed up with pride and ambitious of power, as to assail the government of Heaven, by assuming to themselves the *dignity* of *shepherds* over the descendants of Abraham, to the end, that they may *tythe* the fleece, and *quarter* the carcass.

A learned Jew, in detailing the rise and progress of a society established in London for converting the Jews to the

Christian faith, says :—“ Every method which human ingenuity could invent, or priestly craft devise, was resorted to in order to accomplish this mighty object. But, after upwards of 300,000 dollars had been expended in these efforts to convert our race to the faith, it was discovered that not one sincere worshipper of Jehovah had abandoned our ancient law, and that there remained as the fruits of the labours and vast expenditure of this society only four old helpless women, which necessity had made converts, and who would become worshippers of Mahomet to-morrow, if they were assured of receiving better fare.” And that “there is not one well authenticated instance of a descendant of Abraham apostatizing from disinterested motives.” He continues—“ In the United States, thanks be to the God of our fathers, we have at last found an asylum; where we may worship Jehovah and observe all the ordinances of our law, without fear or molestation.” This is sufficiently consoling to my author, but he does not relish the discoverable object of the American Association: “For,” says he, “I question if the whole history of society-making could furnish an example of a constitution so fraught with absurdity as the one now published to the world by ‘the American Society for meliorating the condition of the Jews.’” So after all the pains and expenditure, (by men honourable for their high-standing) to accomplish an untimely object, he, refuses to be regulated by the *cold calculations* of sectarian Pharaohic task-masters; while he maintains an unshaken confidence in the fulfilment of Almighty promises.

“ And hope still wings his thoughts afar,
It tells to those that roam,
That *He, who rode the cloudy car,*
Will guide his people home.”

Wherefore, it appears so far from being *incumbent*, that it is not even advisable to promote the proposed migration of Jews—and more especially, when it is conceded that we are already overstocked, not precisely with “christianized Jews,” but with *Jewish* christians! Such I mean as make it an invariable rule *to do as they are done by*—to have an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth! And finally, to imagine that the Israelites will volunteer themselves to come under the dominion of a phalanx of sectarian priests, is one of those ridi-

culous incongruities not easy to be solved. But for the sake of exposing the absurdity of the project here in question, let us suppose a penniless cargo of Jewish pilgrims now landing on the banks of the Hudson, and the *leaders* of the several sects that compose this noted association, assembled there to receive and conduct them to the *promised land*—who can avoid anticipating their astonishment and perplexity on perceiving these *blind leaders of the blind* together by the ears, reviling and reviled—the right way to Zion undetermined—no asylum provided—no means to relieve their “temporal wants;” for behold the expenses of collection, &c. &c. had totally absorbed the whole mass of contributions!! But there is still a long and flattering catalogue of auxiliary societies, have they nothing in store? Thus much for the speculative American Jerusalem: thus much for a ludicrous attempt to wheedle the Jews into a submission and vassallage to a company of American Priests.

ELEAZOR.

Long Island, (N. Y.)

FOR THE REFORMER.

[Communicated from the State of Tennessee.]

“My kingdom is not of this world,” said the divine Redeemer, when arraigned before Pilate; the truth of which was verified in every circumstance attending his birth, life, and ignominious death, as well as in his heavenly doctrines, which he preached to the people, and to his disciples; and which were handed down to us in the writings of the Evangelists. And his immediate followers bore living testimony in their lives, doctrines, and declarations, to that of their Divine Master. But as it is now, so it was then; the great doctors of the law, the priests, and high professors of that age, were not pleased with a religion, divested of worldly pomp and splendour, and ensigns of regal power; hence they rejected it with disdain, and put the immaculate founder of it to death, and persecuted his followers, even to strange cities, putting to death, without distinction, all who dared openly to avow that divine but self-denying religion.

The religion or kingdom of Christ, could not then, nor can it now, be blended with the grandeur, show, honours, or riches of this degenerate world, without doing violence to its heavenly and antimundane nature. But how altered—how

changed—how fallen and adulterated, is that gospel, which by the assumed orthodox master-builders of the popular religion of our day, we are taught to believe is the gospel of Christ, and which is parceled out by them, and sold to the highest bidders—how unlike the religion described in the New Testament! It was a subject of exultation in the pristine age of Christianity, that the *poor* had the gospel preached to them; but now, it is but too generally the case, that what is called the gospel, seems to be adapted to none but the *rich*, from the great expense which attends the coming within reach of it in the sumptuous temples in which it has become fashionable to publish it; and from the almost invariable rule adopted by the priesthood—*no pay, no preach*. Jesus Christ took not on himself the dignity of a modern Prelate, or Doctor of Divinity, but the form of a servant—and in all his life, and public administrations, (as before observed,) gave the most unequivocal example of humility, temperance, and contempt of the honours of this world—declaring it to be impossible to serve God and mammon. Paul said that he was crucified to the world, and the world to him. Of silver and gold, Peter and John had none; nor do I read of any in the apostolic age that so fully exemplified the popular clergy of our day, as Judas Iscariot, who sold his master for thirty pieces of silver; and Demas, who forsook Paul, “having loved this present world.”

Unhappily for mankind, the disposition for a religion connected with worldly pomp and splendour, did not die with the Scribes, Pharisees, and doctors of the law—that disposition has had an increase of subjects of late, and I fear that they are yet multiplying. The genuine religion of Christ has ever been as a “root out of a dry ground” to worldly minded men—having no form or comeliness to excite them to desire it; and hence it is, I presume, that men professing religion for lucrative ends, in order to make religion look respectable in the eyes of mankind, that it might be more to their worldly interest, have dressed it up in the most expensive and showy garb. So completely have the clergy and others succeeded in giving to religion its present worldly form, that there are but few cases in which there is not an entire similarity; and so completely has it become a stalking horse to carry into effect the most lucrative designs, that

the greatest worldling, by drawing on the cloak of religion, and conforming to some of the principal dogmas of a favourite party, can be pronounced by his church brethren, on the high road to the mansions of felicity. The road or way to heaven has become so wide in our day, that the warrior, with all his implements of human slaughter about him, can easily walk in it; the tyrannical oppressor of his own species—the traders in human kind—the proud, the extortioner, the avaricious, may all walk comfortably on in the wide and flowery way, and all be hailed by the party to which they are attached, as the humble followers of the meek and lowly Redeemer;—Nay, many, very many of our pretended gospel preachers, wilfully live on the gain of oppression—buy and sell their own species—their “*brethren in Christ*,” and live, and some of them grow rich, on the spoils of absolute oppression—and yet pretend to be leaders of the blind to the rays of celestial light, and eternal happiness. Satan certainly performed his master-piece of imposition on religion, when he persuaded a slave holder, an extortioner, or a proud avaricious mortal, to become a preacher of the gospel.

It is, no doubt, from the worldly appearance which religion, as it is called, has assumed, that so many have of late days become attached to it, and suffer their money and property to be wrested from them, to support a hireling priesthood in idleness and luxury; and the balance to be wasted in building those sumptuous Babels, some of them with towering spires and steeples of the most costly workmanship—useless ensigns of pride and human folly, to command the gaze and idolatrous admiration of proud ignorant mortals for a season, and then to waste and crumble under the all-consuming hand of time, while poverty has been neglected, to sacrifice what might have benefited thousands, on the brazen altar of pride.

From the crowds of clergymen which are emigrating from the orthodox factories, and from other quarters, it is likely we shall soon be as completely inundated with preachers, as Spain or Italy is—these, we are told, are to convert the world to Christianity, and to bring in the Millennium, but I would rather conjecture that there is a deep rooted jealousy existing amongst the leading denominations, and a spirit of proselyting to party, and that money catching is a principal

object; and I dare not say that each may not have it in view to be the strongest and most wealthy party, and as such, some day to enjoy the vast honour of being the national established church, that priests, prelates, and D. D.'s may wallow in wealth, and glitter in worldly splendour. If this, or only a part of it, should be the case, instead of ushering in the Millennium, deists will be multiplied in the world through their agency—God dishonoured, and his name blasphemed.

A BACKWOOD'S MAN.

For the Reformer.

When Jesus Christ sent his disciples to preach the Gospel, his command to them was, "Carry neither purse, nor script, nor shoes;" "neither have two coats apiece;" and "into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are *set before you*." If those in our day, who pretend to be ministers of Christ, were honest men and regarded his commands, they could not act in such direct contradiction to his instructions: but they have had for a long time, and still have in a great degree, the eyes of the people so completely blinded, that they have been enabled to lead them wherever they would; and now that a few are beginning to have their eyes opened, and to see, and expose, the deep and wicked game, that has so long been playing, these crafty priests and missionaries are trembling like Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen, at Ephesus; for by the trade of preaching they have their wealth, and live in splendour. They know very well that if their doings are only laid bare before the eyes of the people, and the vail which has hid them from view is removed, that "much people" will be turned away from them, and that their "craft will be in danger to be set at nought;" and they, like honest men, and as the Scriptures enjoin, will have to earn their bread "by the sweat of the brow."

Can these men claim the name of disciples of Christ, and pretend to be sent by him, when, instead of depending upon him for support, they are at so much trouble to provide such splendid equipments, and are careful to have large salaries of earthly mammon? These are the very men who "bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."

ONESIMUS.

For the Reformer.

Messrs. Editors—From recent occurrences in this place, I was induced to give the *Reformer* a perusal; and in justice to you, must say, I think it a work of general utility, and ought to be patronised, notwithstanding the exertions of the Rev. Mr. *Clifton*, and others of this place, to put it down. As to the Rev. Mr. *Clifton*, I shall say nothing at this time, as regards him as a man or a Christian, further, than that I know “it is not all gold that glitters.”

The object of this communication is merely to apprise you of the exertions of some here, to injure your work, and to give you an opportunity to defend it, and to refute the vile charge of inculcating doctrines of infidelity. You may say the work itself refutes that charge—true, it has so far; but it has been reported here and obtained credit with some, that this is not the ostensible doctrine and object of the Editors,—that you merely send it forth in its present garb to lull suspicion, until it obtains a reputation, at which time you are to disclose your cloven foot, and endeavour to kick over Christianity, and establish Infidelity on its ruins. If this is your object, I say, away with you and the *Reformer*; but until I see doctrines contrary to that of “Jesus Christ, and him crucified,” contended for by you, I shall continue to patronise your work.

If you think proper to give this a place in the *Reformer*, you can insert it, if not, there is no apology necessary.

Columbia, (S. C.) Oct. 15, 1823.

CORIAN.

The above communication has been inserted in order to enable our readers to see the measures resorted to by some ‘Reverends’ at the south, to prevent the circulation of a work which exposes their craft and their practices. We had supposed, ere this, that persons of only common understanding would perceive that such a course of proceeding, and charges so unwarranted, could answer them nor their cause any valuable purpose. We are under no apprehensions that those who are acquainted with us, and are capable of understanding the contents of the *Reformer*, will be affrighted at either the silly or malicious charge of inculcating doctrines of infidelity; and the insinuation that it is our design, after a time, to endeavour to establish infidelity on the ruins of Christianity, can do harm to none except to those with whom it originated. Men who resort to such means for supporting their cause, resemble more than they are aware, the Scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites of old; who with the same design, and in

the same spirit, charged the Redeemer with being a devil, and acting under the agency of Beelzebub the prince of devils, because his testimony exposed their ways and practices. To undertake to prove that we shall not come out advocates for infidelity, would be much the same as to undertake to prove that we shall not become advocates for piracy on the high seas. We have not a wavering doubt with respect to the truth or of the Divine authority of the Christian Religion, and our only object has been, and will continue to be, to remove the abuses and corruptions practised in the name of Christianity, by interested priests and their blinded devotees. In the discharge of this duty we shall not be intimidated or turned from our purpose by 'divines,' or their partisans, either to the south or the north.

We have seen only No. II. of the 'Rev.' Major Clifton's productions against the *Reformer*. We fear nothing from the pen of this champion, whose title, 'Rev. Major,' by the bye, sounds a little incongruous for a defender of the principles of the gospel. We hope the 'Rev.' Major will continue the subject he is upon, in a series of numbers, and make it extensively known in his section of the country that there is such a work published as the *Reformer*, designed to point out the abuses and evils among hireling priests and corrupt professors, and to show the dissimilarity which exists between their conduct and the precepts of the gospel. If he will do this, and afterwards publish the whole in a pamphlet, he shall receive our thanks, and we will give him some aid in its circulation.

MRS. JUDSON.

From a statement made by a Committee of the Boston Baptist Society, it would appear that the estimate of Mrs. Judson's dress, in the article published some time since, has been quite overrated. The Editor of the *Galaxy* was authorized to make the statement by an individual whose name he gave up when called on by Mr. Lincoln, one of the Committee. This same member of the committee, says the Editor, "has repeatedly said to me, that he considered I had sufficient authority for the statement I published, and very candidly acknowledged, that, if he had entertained views of the utility of Foreign Missions similar to mine, he should not have hesitated to publish what I did, *on that authority*." Inquiries were made among several persons, but it would have been more satisfactory to us if the committee had extended their inquiries to the "lady in Bradford."

We had selected the principal statement made by the committee, and a reply to it by the Editor of the *Galaxy*, for this number, but decline their publication at present for the reasons assigned in the following article, copied from a northern paper.

"*Mrs. Judson's Dress*.—It is proper to notify our readers, that the account of Mrs. Judson, which we published from the New England *Galaxy*, and which has been made the subject of so

much conversation, if not contention, in many places, was inserted wholly on the authority of that paper, as we plead ignorance of the woman, her apparel, visiting circles, and object of pursuit. If the story was true, she was very imprudent in wearing an extremely costly dress, while engaged in a work, demanding such stricken humility. But if the account was unfounded in facts, and the female missionary was grossly misrepresented, we conceive that every ingenuous editor will feel disposed to correct all unfair impressions on the public mind. To us, however, nothing has yet appeared, to warrant a denial of the principal facts, alleged in the account. We have seen the Report of the honourable Committee, appointed by the "Boston Baptist Association at Salem;" but it appears to us quite too exceptionable to merit a place in our paper, as a denial of the first account. The Committee's Report is elaborate, and most cautiously written. It is not that direct and unequivocal denial of the story which elicited it, that a discerning public had a right to expect. We are suspicious that the humble *dress*, which Mrs. Judson's Baptist friends describe, was purchased for the purpose of shielding her from public censure. They probably heard many unfavourable remarks, and to make her visit more subservient to the Missionary purposes, did not wish her to appear in so splendid a costume. We do not believe that the Committee have come so near the real value of the articles of dress of which so much has been said, as did the author of the story we published. They have valued *a* dress, but not *the* dress, to which we allude. Mrs. Judson probably had more than one suit. Though we promise to publish any authentic and positive denial of the account whenever it appears, we feel in duty bound to reject such evasive and cautious contradictions as are found in the Report to which we allude. Our readers are soberly requested not to place too much confidence in the clamorous exultations of the vindicators of Mrs. Judson, till it is fairly proved that the exaggeration of the truth was greater than is common in giving a rhetorical colouring to stories of a similar character."

[Whoever has seen the reply of the Editor of the *Galaxy* to the statements made by the Committee, will not be surprised at the inferences drawn, and the course adopted, in this article.]

The paragraph in the *Christian Repository* of Sept. 5th, which we attributed to "Paul," so called, was the production, it appears, of the Editor. If it adds any thing to his credit, or in favour of his Christianity, we should be sorry to deprive him of the advantages of it, or of any other notice with which he may favour us. We must, however, here tell the Editor—If he thinks he is serving God by serving the cause of mercenary priests, and advocating the propriety of contributing money for educating young men to dishonour the Gospel, by turning it into merchandise, he will find in another world, if not in this, that he has been under

a very serious mistake. Our conviction, in regard to this matter, is not founded on the authority of men but on the example and testimony of Christ and the apostles. When we see any one acting in opposition to these, with the best opportunity of knowing that he is doing so, we cannot but regret the course he has taken, whether he has been induced to it from motives of interest and popularity, or from mistaken apprehensions.

CLERICAL SENTIMENTS.

"Should the people of that new commonwealth [Illinois] be so infatuated, as to dare to blot their constitution with the assertion of the immoral and degrading claim of slavery, as a right, it is devoutly hoped there will be virtue enough found in the northern and middle states to enforce, at the point of the bayonet, if necessary, the fulfilment of the solemn compact of 1787."

Such are the sentiments and words of James R. Willson, A. M. preacher in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and Editor of the "Evangelical Witness," printed at Newburgh, N. Y. As a statesman or politician, Mr. Willson might be consistent enough in advancing such sentiments; but as a Christian minister, he ought to blush to be found the advocate for blood and slaughter. Besides, such expressions, from such a quarter, are not calculated to convince the judgment, or accomplish the purpose for which they were intended.

It is hoped that subscribers and agents, in arrears, will make payments by the close of this year. The proprietor has been unwilling to mention this subject of late, on account of the sickness which has prevailed in most parts of the country, and the slackness of business and want of communication experienced during that period. Circumstances becoming now more favourable, payments can more readily be made, and they are wanted to defray the expenses incurred by the work. Punctuality on one part demands punctuality on the other in return. The various concerns attending a periodical publication, when they principally devolve on an individual, leave but little time to devote for obtaining payments. This matter must therefore be pretty much left to the honesty of subscribers, who are regularly reminded once a month of an item of expense in their behalf.—As the books are kept by the Proprietor, 290, North Third Street, unless subscribers know the state of their accounts it will be advisable on coming to the city to call there.

So numerous are the concerns, and such is the anxiety attending the publication of a periodical work, (known only to an Editor and publisher) that the work would be discontinued were it not believed that the task is a duty. But convinced that the mercenary schemes and abuses of the present day still need rebuke, and that we ought not yet to relinquish our labours, subscribers are informed that the Reformer will be continued another year.

Various small articles intended for this number are necessarily delayed.

The Reformer is printed on the first day of each month, at one dollar a year. Letters to be addressed to T. R. GATES, Proprietor and principal Editor, No. 290, North Third Street, Philadelphia. When it is more convenient, persons wishing to subscribe or make payments, may call on the firm of Wm. & Joseph Marot, back of No. 93, Market Street, who will receive remittances and furnish the numbers. Numbers can yet be supplied from the commencement of the work.

John Richards, Printer, No. 20, Church Alley.